

January 29, 2010



Planning Department Newsletter

COUNCIL HOLDS HEARING ON PROPOSED PREZONES

In July of last year, the planning department initiated a proposal to establish prezone designations for 515 acres of land outside the city limits in an area generally bordered by the Palouse Highway (State Route 27) on the east, NW Terre View Drive on the south, Brayton Road on the west, and Albion Road on the north. Prezone designations can be assigned by the city in anticipation of the property being annexed at some future date. The prezone classifications do not take effect until the applicable land is incorporated into the city. The particular designations proposed by the planning department in this case are 15 acres of C3 General Commercial zoning on the south side of the Albion Road near its intersection with State Route 27, 67 acres of I1 Light Industrial land on both sides of the Albion Road near its intersection with State Route 27, and R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential zoning for the remaining 433 acres.

The review process for establishing prezone designations involves one public hearing before the Planning Commission and two hearings before the City Council. The Planning Commission conducted its

public hearing regarding this matter on September 23 and October 7 of last year. After accepting public comment, the majority of which related to concerns about the proposed R2 prezone and its potential incompatibility with surrounding land uses, the Planning Commission decided to recommend that the C3 and I1 prezones be retained as proposed and that the requested R2 classification be changed to R1 Single Family Residential.

The City Council held its first hearing on this case at its January 12 meeting. During that hearing, eight citizens voiced their objections to the proposal. These individuals noted their concerns regarding the anticipated increase in traffic on rural roads and the effect this would have on transportation facilities in the area, the expected loss of prime agricultural land, the alteration of the property's rural character, the potential impact from a project of this magnitude on the community's potable water supply, and the possible impact of this development on wetlands and other environmental features. Some of these citizens stated that, if it was necessary to establish such a large residential prezone district, they would prefer that it be classified as R1 rather than R2, as the Planning Commission had recommended.

At the end of this proceeding, the Council decided to conduct its second public hearing related to this matter on February 23. All interested persons are encouraged to participate in this upcoming session. At the conclusion of the second hearing, the Council is expected to make a final decision regarding this proposal.

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The C3 and I1 prezones are proposed for the area near the Albion Road.

STATE LEGISLATURE CONSIDERS CHANGES TO PLANNING DEADLINES

It has been widely publicized that the state of Washington, like many other states, is encountering significant financial challenges. Washington's revenue - heavily reliant on sales tax dollars - has suffered substantially due to the recent recession. In the past year, the state resolved a \$9 billion budget deficit. Then, late last year, it was announced that the state is facing an additional \$2.6 billion revenue shortfall for the current biennium (2009-2011). These financial constraints are now prompting the State Legislature to review certain deadlines associated with the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) and Shoreline Management Act (SMA).

The GMA was passed in 1990 to promote sound community planning through a coordinated set of procedures. For many jurisdictions (generally those which are experiencing the fastest population growth), the act requires the adoption and periodic revision of comprehensive plans and development regulations. (Pullman and Whitman County are not subject to this requirement.) For all cities and counties, the GMA mandates the creation and regular review of standards protecting environmentally sensitive areas (commonly known as a "critical areas ordinance").

The SMA was approved by the electorate in a 1972 referendum with a three-fold purpose to protect shoreline resources, promote public access to shorelines, and encourage water-dependent uses. The act requires each city and county to adopt and periodically update a shoreline master program for its jurisdiction.

Since the adoption of these laws, the state has provided funding to local governments to help in meeting the obligations of the two statutes. However, the current strain on the state budget is limiting the availability of this financial assistance.

For example, during the 2009 legislative session, funds were appropriated for city and county GMA responsibilities, but Governor Christine Gregoire has now placed a "hold" on this allocation through the end of the biennium. At present, state funding for SMA programs is still available.

The state's financial situation has led the Governor and the Legislature to consider extending the GMA and SMA timelines for cities and counties. Bills currently being considered by the House and Senate would delay Pullman's required updates as follows:

- **GMA-mandated Critical Areas Ordinance:**
 - current law: next update due in 2014, with subsequent updates due every seven years thereafter
 - proposed law: next update due in 2020, with subsequent updates due every ten years thereafter
- **SMA-mandated Shoreline Master Program:**
 - current law: next update due in 2014, with subsequent updates due every seven years thereafter
 - proposed law: next update due in 2014, the following update due in 2027, and subsequent updates due every ten years thereafter

The most recent revision of Pullman's critical areas ordinance was completed in 2007. The city's initial shoreline master program was adopted in 1974, and it has not been altered since.

For those interested in tracking these or other bills through the legislative process, the website offered by the Washington State Legislature (<http://www.leg.wa.gov/pages/home.aspx>) is a convenient resource.



Pending Land Use Proposals

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	citywide	CC requested ordinance revisions on 1/20; ad hoc committee met on 2/9 to address ordinance revisions; legal staff reviewing draft ordinance amendments
Hinrichs Annexation	annex 37 acres to the city	west of Sunnyside Park and north of SW Old Wawawai Road	staff reviewing revised legal description of property
Mader Land Prezone Proposal	prezone 433 acres as R2, 67 acres as I1, and 15 acres as C3	outside city limits; west of SR 27, east of Brayton Road, both sides of Albion Road	PC made recommendation on proposal 10/7; CC held 1st hearing on 1/12; CC 2nd hearing scheduled for 2/23
College Hill Core Neighborhood Draft Plan	establish and implement neighborhood plan for College Hill Core area	area surrounded by Stadium Way, Grand Avenue, Main Street, except WSU campus	CC adopted plan 11/17; PC discussed implementation schedule at 1/27 meeting
Whispering Hills No. 5 Planned Residential Development (PRD) Final Plan	establishment of 17 lots on 2.2 acres in a PRD	south of Old Wawawai Road and west of Sunnyside Park	staff reviewing application, and awaiting additional application materials
West Street Vacation	vacate east half of a portion of West Street	west of Douglas Drive/Darrow Street intersection	PC found partial vacation consistent with Comp Plan on 1/27; CC to conduct hearing at a date to be determined
Sacred Heart Church Canopy Conditional Use Expansion Request (09-3)	construct 110-sq-ft canopy over rear entryway of church building	400 NE Ash Street	staff awaiting complete application
Itani Valley Road Apartments site plan (09-1)	construct 16-unit apartment building on 27,000-sq-ft lot	1245 NE Valley Road	staff requested applicant to revise site plan

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

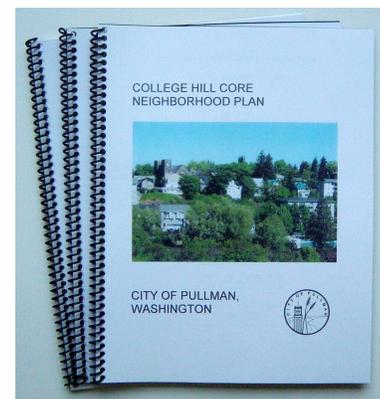
NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list.. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.



PRINTED COPIES OF COLLEGE HILL PLAN AVAILABLE

As noted in last month's newsletter, the City Council adopted the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan in November. Bound color copies of this plan are now available for the public at the planning department office in City Hall. The cost per document is \$10.10. The plan is also available for review at Neill Public Library.

In addition, city staff is currently formatting an electronic copy of the plan to place on the planning department page of the city's website. We expect this electronic version to be posted there by the end of February.





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WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV
